

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A toothbrush comprising:
 - (a) a toothbrush head attached to, or integrally formed with, an elongated handle, a direction of elongation of said handle being referred to as an axis; and
 - (b) a plurality of brush elements associated with said toothbrush head, each of said brush elements including at least one tuft of bristles, a dimension of each of said brush elements parallel to said axis being no more than about 5 mm,

wherein each of said brush elements assumes a released state projecting substantially upright from said toothbrush head, and wherein each of said brush elements is associated with a motion delineating configuration which defines a preferred direction of deflection of at least part of said brush element, said preferred direction of deflection being substantially perpendicular to a bristle extension direction and at an angle of between about 15° and about 75° to said axis.

2. The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein said dimension of each of said brush elements parallel to said axis is no more than about 3 mm.

3. The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein each of said brush elements includes exactly one tuft of bristles.

4. The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein said preferred direction of deflection is at an angle of between about 30° and about 60° to said axis.

5. The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein said preferred direction of deflection is at an angle of between about 40° and about 50° to said axis.

6. The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein said motion delineating configuration includes a flexible shaft portion of each of said brush elements, said shaft portion being constructed so as to exhibit a preferred direction of flexing corresponding to said preferred direction of deflection.

7. The toothbrush of claim 6, wherein said flexible shaft portion has a cross-sectional shape with a major dimension and a minor dimension, said minor dimension being no more than two thirds of said major dimension so as to define said preferred direction of flexing.

8. The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein said motion delineating configuration includes a hinge arrangement defining an arcuate path of at least part of said brush element.

9. The toothbrush of claim 8, wherein said hinge arrangement includes a hinge formed as part of said brush element.

10. The toothbrush of claim 8, wherein said hinge arrangement includes a hinge formed between said brush element and said toothbrush head.

11. The toothbrush of claim 8, wherein said hinge arrangement includes a substantially cylindrical pin element inserted into a complementary socket.

12. The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein said motion delineating configuration includes an elongated slot associated with said toothbrush head for limiting movement of said brush element to a predefined direction.

13. The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein said motion delineating configuration includes an elongated slot formed in said toothbrush head within which said brush element is slidably mounted.

14. The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein said motion delineating configuration includes a resilient element deployed to bias said brush element to return to said released state.